The Turning Wheel

A Little Book of
Quotations
about Pre-existence
and Re-incarnation

Compiled by
Mary E. Wilkinson

THE TURNING WHEEL.

"The greatest minds humanity has produced have accepted Reincarnation."—Max Müller.

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about
Pre-Existence and Reincarnation.

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Commonwealth of Australia
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Melbourne

THE GALLEON PRESS
18 Norris Street,
Canterbury, Vic.
P.O. Box 655, Melb.

FOREWORD.

Personal conviction of the truth of Reincarnation has led to the compilation of this little book.

There comes a time to most thinking people when life seems a jumble of unrelated events: a time of purposeless suffering and perplexity. One seeks for evidence of some underlying justice, and fails to find it. System after system of philosophy seems to lack just the comfort or explanation that is needed: science chills with its ruthless law of heredity: the Church fails to answer the most pressing of all human problems, and urges devotion to a personal God more relentless than any human parent; who punishes innocent babes "to the third and fourth generation." One sees, on the one hand, a child born into circumstances so fortunate that not only is worldly comfort to be its lot, but also a heritage of goodness and purity; on the other, a child is born into surroundings so vile that it is inevitably committed from its very birth to a life of wickedness.

How are we to reconcile such inequalities with a belief in an all-loving and all-powerful Creator? Why is the one child so indulged: the other so hopelessly handicapped?

Nothing but Reincarnation can help us. In the light of its truth life's problems melt away one by

one. We are restored to a belief in God and a universe governed by law. We are given glimpses of a destiny for man far transcending in possibility anything hitherto dreamed of: one leading, in truth,

"From the finite to infinity,
And from man's dust to God's divinity!"

—Robert Browning.

The East has almost universally accepted Reincarnation. The present booklet, incomplete as it is, will suffice to show that many of the greatest minds the West has produced have regarded it as a sane and helpful theory of life: the only doctrine of immortality, as Hume puts it, "that philosophy can hearken to." Christ Himself permitted His disciples to believe in it,* and there is little doubt of its acceptance by the early Church fathers. It is hoped that at the present moment, when so many thousands are seeking a more reasonable explanation of life than orthodoxy has to offer, this little book may do its part in supplying that of which they are in need.

MARY E. WILKINSON.

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*See pp. 17, 18.

Perhaps 'tis the desert of years
That severs each from each;
And out of the cavernous centuries to each other we
blindly reach.
You blossomed so long ago
That only the dawn and the Spring remember—and
little, so little, they know!
You wait on the hill of the first white morn,
Straining dead eyes to me, unborn,
Across the desert of years.

ARTHUR H. ADAMS.
(To You.)

Eternity—thou pleasing, dreadful thought,
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and dangers must we pass?
The wide, th'unbounded prospect lies before me,
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.

JOSEPH ADDISON.
(Cato's Soliloquy on the Soul.)

Thou, O Lord, didst know me before the world was made.—Thomas à Kempis.

Our present lack of recollection of past lives is no disproof of their actuality. Every night we lose all knowledge of the past, but every day we re-awaken to a memory of the whole series of days and nights. So, in one life we may forget or dream, and in another recover the whole thread of experience from the beginning.

REV. WILLIAM R. ALGER.
(History of the Doctrine of a Future Life.)

As billows on the undulating main
That swelling fall, and falling swell again,
So on the tide of time incessant roll
The dying body and the deathless soul.

ANON.

Be worthy of death; and so learn to live
That every incarnation of thy soul
In varied realms, and worlds, and firmaments
Shall be more pure and high.

ANON.

DASS WEISS ICH SHON.

Forth from what realms of earlier existence
Com'st thou to me?
Claimed by what irresistible persistence
Yield I to thee?

Surging from deeps unplumbed by recollection
Swims into ken
Thy soul that erst hath held me in subjection—
But where? But when?

All has been said, been thought, been done, explained,
Ages ago.
Only the quintessence of love remained
For us to know.

Therefore it was that while I sat beside thee
I touched no hand.
What need for word, for touch, for kiss to guide thee?
We understand.

ANON.

All that flesh doth cover
Souls by source sublime
Are but slaves sold over
To the master, Time.
To work out their ransom
For the ancient crime.

ANON.

And while the wheel of birth and death turns round
That which hath been must be, between us two.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.
(The Light of Asia.)

Of what fault is this the fruit?
I cannot call to mind a wrong I wrought
To any—even a little thing—in act,
Or thought, or word; whence then hath come this curse?
Belike from ill deeds done in bygone lives
It hath befallen, and what I suffer now
Is payment of old evils undischarged.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.
(Indian Idylls.)

He who shall say, "Lo! I have slain a man!"
He who shall think, "Lo! I am slain!" those both
Know naught! Life cannot slay. Life is not slain!
Never the spirit was born; the spirit shall cease to be never;
Never was time it was not; End and Beginning are dreams!
Birthless and deathless and changeless remaineth the spirit for ever;
Death hath not touched it at all, dead though the house of it seems!

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.
(The Song Celestial.)

I knew not yet the gauge of Time,
Nor wore the manacles of Space.
I felt it in some other clime—
I saw it in some other place.
'Twas when the heavenly house I trod,
And lay upon the breast of God.

MATTHEW ARNOLD.
(Mortality.)

Fifteen years have gone round
Since thou arosest to tread,
In the summer morning, the road
Of death, at a call unforeseen,
Sudden! For fifteen years.
We who till then in thy shade
Rested as under the boughs
Of a mighty oak, have endured
Sunshine and rain as we might,
Bare, unshaded, alone,
Lacking the shelter of thee!

O strong soul, by what shore
Tarriest thou now? For that force,
Surely, has not been left vain!
Somewhere, surely, afar,
In the sounding labour-house vast
Of Being, is practised that strength,
Zealous, beneficent, firm!

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Who dreams not life more yearful than the hours
Since first into this world he wept his way
Erreth much, maybe. Called of God, man's soul
In patriarchal periods, comet-like,
Ranges, perchance, all spheres successive, and in each
With nobler powers endowed and senses new
Set season bideth.

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY.

Souls without a past behind them, springing suddenly into existence, out of nothing, with marked mental and moral peculiarities, are a conception as monstrous as would be the corresponding conception of babies suddenly appearing from nowhere, unrelated to anybody, but showing marked racial and family types.

ANNIE BESANT.
(The Ancient Wisdom.)

The main difficulty with many people in the reception of the doctrine of Reincarnation is their own absence of memory of their past. Yet they are every day familiar with the fact that they have forgotten very much even of their lives in their present bodies, and that the early years of childhood are blurred, and those of infancy a blank. They must also know that events of the past which have entirely slipped out of their normal consciousness are yet hidden

away in dark caves of memory, and can be brought out again vividly in some form of disease, or under the influence of mesmerism.

IBID.

The difficulty of memory does not lie in forgetfulness, for the lower vehicle, the physical body, has never passed through the previous lives of its owner; it lies in the absorption of the present body in its present environment. . . . Those who would remember the past must not have their interests centred in the present, and they must purify and refine the body till it is able to receive impressions from the subtler spheres.

IBID.

Clear, quick insight and prompt judgment are nothing else than the outcome of past experience moulded into an effective form for use.

IBID.

From all these lines of thought the mind turns back to rest on the fundamental necessity for Reincarnation if life is to be made intelligible, and if injustice and cruelty are not to mock the helplessness of man. . . . In dropping Reincarnation from its beliefs, the modern world has deprived God of His justice, and has bereft man of his security . . . the strength and dignity conferred by reliance on a

changeless law are rent away from him, and he is left tossing helplessly on an unnavigable ocean of life. IBID.

Looking at this long-turning wheel of Births and Deaths, a man may feel a sense of weariness. But it must be remembered that each life-period is new to the one living through it; by a wise arrangement, a man down here forgets his past, at least until he is strong enough to bear its weight, and as Goethe said rejoicingly, we "return bathed" and fresh. There is no sense of weariness in the child, joyously springing out to meet his new life, but a sense of glad vitality, of eager enjoyment, of ever-fresh delights. . . . . Every life is a new opportunity, and if we have wasted one life, we have always "another chance." Reincarnation is essentially a Gospel, good news, for it makes an end of despair, encourages effort, cheers with the proclamation of final success, and ensures the permanence of every fragment, every seed, of good in us, and time enough for the least evolved to flower into perfection. IBID.

(Theosophy.)

The *inborn inequality* in men need no longer distress us—the inequality between the splendidly-shaped and the cripple, the healthy and the diseased, the genius and the fool, the saint and the criminal,

the hero and the coward. True, they are born thus, and bring with them into the world these inequalities, which they cannot transcend. But they are either much younger in experience, or have built themselves as they are under the laws of nature; every weakness will disappear in time, opportunity after opportunity will come to them, every height is open to them to climb with the strength necessary for its scaling. . . . By giving him sufficient time, it (Reincarnation) puts into man's hands the power to make his destiny as he wills, and to create himself after his ideals. . . . As Hume said, "it is the only theory of immortality that the philosopher can look at."

IBID.

Ordinary intuition is merely recognition of a fact familiar in a past life, though met with for the first in the present.

IBID.
(Reincarnation.)

Thou grievest for those that should not be grieved for, yet speakest words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead.

Nor at any time verily was I not, nor thou, nor these princes of men, nor verily shall we ever cease to be, hereafter.

As the dweller in the body experienceth in the body childhood, youth, old age, so passeth he on to

another body; the steadfast one grieveth not thereat.

The contacts of matter, O son of Kunti, giving cold and heat, pleasure and pain, they come and go, impermanent; endure them bravely, O Bharata.

BHAGAVAD-GITA.
(2.11 et seq.)

The Blessed Lord said:

Many births have been left behind by Me and by thee, O Arjuna; I know them all, but thou knowest not thine, O Parantapa.

Though unborn, the imperishable SELF, and also the Lord of all beings, brooding over nature, which is Mine own, yet I am born through My own Power.

Whenever there is decay of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the sake of firmly establishing righteousness, I am born from age to age.

He who thus knoweth My divine birth and action, in its essence, having abandoned the body, cometh not to birth again, but cometh unto Me, O Arjuna.

Freed from passion, fear, and anger, filled with Me, taking refuge in Me, purified in the fire of wisdom, many have entered into My Being.

However men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine, O Partha.

BHAGAVAD-GITA.
(4.5 et seq.)

REFERENCES TO REINCARNATION IN THE BIBLE.*

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Phillipi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?

And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. Matt. xvi., 13-17.

And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.

But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

Matt. xvii., 10-13.

*Note.—See also pp. 61-2: Chevalier Ramsay.

Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead:

And of some, that Elias had appeared: and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

St. Luke ix., 7-8.

And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written:

After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down.

Acts xv., 15-16.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out.

Rev. iii., 12.

Before Abraham was, I am. John vi., 62.

For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. John xvii., 24.

The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before the works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no foundations abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth: while as yet he

had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the deep: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the foundations of the deep . . . . and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men.

SOLOMON.

I have been here before,
But when or how I cannot tell:
I know the grass beyond the door,
The sweet, keen smell,
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

You have been mine before;
How long ago I may not know,
But just when at that swallow's soar.
Your neck turned so . . . .
Some veil did fall—I knew it all of yore.

ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.
(Julius le Vallon.)

In my brain are studies and chambers filled with books and pictures of old which I wrote and painted in ages of eternity before my mortal life.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

It seems to me a firm and well-grounded faith in the doctrine of metempsychosis might help to regenerate the world, for it would be a faith not hedged round with many of the difficulties and objections which beset other forms of doctrine, and it offers distinct and pungent motives for trying to lead a more Christian life and for loving and helping our brother-man.

PROFESSOR FRANCIS BOWEN.

Our life upon earth is rightly held to be a discipline and a preparation for a higher and eternal life hereafter. But if limited to the duration of a single mortal body, it is so brief as to seem hardly sufficient for so grand a purpose. Why may it not be continued, or repeated, through a long series of successive generations, the same personality animating one after another an indefinite number of tenements of flesh, and carrying forward into each the training it has received, the character it has formed, the temper and dispositions it has indulged, in the stage of existence immediately preceding?

PROFESSOR FRANCIS BOWEN.
(Christian Metempsychosis.)

The doctrine of metempsychosis may almost claim to be a natural or innate belief in the human mind, if we may judge from its wide diffusion among the

nations of the earth, and its prevalence throughout the historical ages.

PROF. FRANCIS. BOWEN.

I shall never, in the years remaining,
Paint you pictures, no, nor carve you statues.
This of verse alone one life allows me;
Other heights in other lives, God willing.

ROBERT BROWNING.
(One Word More.)

At times I almost dream
I too have spent a life the sage's way,
And tread once more familiar paths. Perchance
I perished in an arrogant self-reliance
An age ago; and in that act, a prayer
For one more chance went up so earnest, so
Instinct with better light let in by Death,
That life was blotted out—not so completely
But scattered wrecks enough of it remain,
Dim memories; as now, when seems once more
The goal in sight again.

ROBERT BROWNING.
(Paracelsus.)

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its term:
Hence shall I pass, approved
A man, for ay removed
From the developed brute; a God though in the germ.

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone
Once more on my adventure brave and new:
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armour to indue.

ROBERT BROWNING.
(Rabbi Ben Ezra.)

Doubt you if, in some such moment,
As she fixed me, she felt clearly,
Ages past the soul existed,
Here an age 'tis resting merely,
And hence fleets again for ages,
While the true end, sole and single,
It stops here for, is, this love-way,
With another soul to mingle?

Else it loses what it lived for,
And eternally must lose it;
Better ends may be in prospect,
Deeper blisses (if you choose it),
But this life's end and this love-bliss
Have been lost here. Doubt you whether
This she felt as, looking at me,
Mine and her souls rushed together?

Oh, observe! Of course, next moment,
The world's honours, in derision,
Trampled out the light for ever:
Never fear but there's provision
Of the devil's to quench knowledge
Lest we walk the earth in rapture!
Making those who catch God's secret
Just so much more prize their capture!

Such am I: the secret's mine now!
She has lost me. I have gained her;
Her soul's mine, and thus, grown perfect,
I shall pass my life's remainder.
Life will just hold out the proving
Both our powers, alone and blended:
And then, come next life quickly!
This world's use will have been ended.

ROBERT BROWNING.
(Cristina.)

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead;
Sit and watch by her side an hour.
That is her book-shelf, this her bed;
She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die, too, in the glass;
Little has yet been changed, I think:
The shutters are shut, no light may pass
Save two long rays thro' the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;
It was not her time to love; beside,
Her life had many a hope and aim,
Duties enough, and little cares,
And now was quiet, now astir,
Till God's hand beckoned unawares,—
And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late, then, Evelyn Hope?
What, your soul was pure and true,
The good stars met in your horoscope,
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew—
And, just because I was thrice as old
And our paths in the world diverged so wide.
Each was nought to each, must I be told?
We were fellow mortals, nought beside?

No, indeed! For God above
Is great to grant, as mighty to make,
And creates the love to reward the love:
I claim you still, for my own love's sake!
Delayed it may be for more lives yet,
Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few:
Much is to learn, much to forget,
Ere the time be come for taking you.

ROBERT BROWNING.
(Evelyn Hope.)

In such a frame of mind, earnest, purified, cleansed, steady, freed from dross, docile, pliable, firm, impregnable, I directed my mind to gain knowledge by recollection of earlier states of existence. I remembered many former states as one life, then as two lives . . . . then as a hundred thousand lives: I remembered the times of many creations and many times of decay, of the world and death . . . . there was I, such was my name, such my family, such and such my profession and my rank, such weal and woe did I experience, and such was the end of my life: there after death I re-entered life elsewhere . . . . dead, I re-entered life here. Thus I recalled many different forms of previous existence.

——— THE BUDDHA.

There is internally no greater improbability that the present may be the result of a former state now almost wholly forgotten, than that the present should be followed by a future form of existence in which, perhaps, or in some departments of which, the oblivion may be as complete.

PROFESSOR W. A. BUTLER.
(The History of Ancient Philosophy.)

It may be doubted whether the strangeness and improbability of this hypothesis (pre-existence) among ourselves arises, after all, from grounds on which our philosophy has reason to congratulate

itself. It may be questioned whether, if we examine ourselves candidly, we shall not discover that the feeling of extravagance with which it affects us has its secret source in materialistic or semi-materialistic prejudices.

PROFESSOR W. A. BUTLER.
(Lectures on Platonic Philosophy.)

Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand million of them walking the earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch tick one.

CARLYLE.

Every pain that I suffered in one body became a power that I wielded in the next.

EDWARD CARPENTER.
("Towards Democracy.")

Mother of Pity, hear my prayer,
That in the endless round of birth
No more may break my heart on earth,
Nor by the windless waters of the blest
Weary of rest;
That drifting, drifting, I abide not anywhere.
Yet if by Karma's law I must
Resume this mantle of the dust,
Grant me, I pray,
One dew-drop from thy willow spray,
And in the double lotus keep
My golden heart asleep.

(Taken from a tomb on the Fu-Kiu mountain district of Foo-Chow, in the Province of Kiang-Su. The date of the poem is many centuries old. Rendered into English from the Chinese by L. Cranmer Byng. In China the double lotus is the emblem of happy union between two lovers.)

EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS WHO BELIEVED IN REINCARNATION.

If our course be not marked out according to our works before this life, how is it true that it is not unjust in God that the elder should serve the younger and be hated, before he had done things deserving of servitude and of hatred?

——— ORIGEN.

Father, grant that my soul, mingling with the Light, may no more be plunged in the delusion of Earth. ——— SYNESIUS.

Souls who have failed to unite themselves with God, are compelled, by the law of destiny, to begin a new kind of life, entirely different from their former, until they repent of their sins.

CHALCIDIUS.

It was not only the Somoanians, Basilidians, Valentinians, Marcionites, etc., and in general those who are called Gnostics, who abandoned themselves to the error of metempsychosis, but also Christian philosophers of great merit and high virtue, the error being exceedingly seductive on account of its antiquity and universality, and because of the principles of which it was believed to be the consequence.

BEAUSOBRE.

(Histoire Critique de Manichée et du Manichéisme.)

It would be curious if we should find science and philosophy taking up again the old theory of metempsychosis, remodelling it to suit our present modes of religious and scientific thought, and launching it again on the wide ocean of human belief. But stranger things have happened in the history of human opinion.

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

That man has come up to his present state of development by passing through lower forms is the popular doctrine of science to-day. . . . It is true that the Darwinian theory takes no notice of the evolution of the soul, but only of the body. But it appears to me that a combination of the two views would remove many difficulties which still attach to the theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest. If we are to believe in evolution, let us have the assistance of the soul itself in this development of new species. Thus science and philosophy will co-operate, nor will poetry hesitate to lend her aid.

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

Forgive? O yes! How lightly, lightly said!
Forget! No, never, while the ages roll,
Till God slay o'er again the undying dead,
And quite unmake my soul!

MARY COLERIDGE.

Oft in my brain does that strange fancy roll
Which makes the present (while the flash does last)
Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past,
Mixed with such feelings as perplex the soul
Self-questioned in her sleep: and some have said
We lived, ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.
O my sweet baby! when I reach my door
If heavy looks should tell me thou art dead
(As sometimes through excess of love I fear),
I think that I should struggle to believe
Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere
Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve;
Didst scream, then spring to meet Heaven's quick retrieve
While we wept idly o'er thy little bier.

——— COLERIDGE.

I wondered whether the ordinary baby of earth, looking so meditative and wise, is thinking of the world he has lately left.

MORTIMER COLLINS.

In the foreground was a group of silent peasant girls, leaning over the parapet of the little bridge, looking now up at the sky, now down into the water; in the distance a deep dell; the shadow of an approaching night on everything. If I had been murdered there in some former life I could not have

seemed to remember the place more thoroughly, or with more emphatic chilling of the blood; and the real remembrance of it acquired in that minute is so strengthened by the imaginary recollection that I hardly think I could forget it.

CHARLES DICKENS.
(Pictures from Italy.)

Of the end of life they (the Gauls) make no account. In fact, the opinion of Pythagoras prevails among them, that the souls of men are immortal, and come to life again after a certain term of years, entering other bodies. DIODORUS SICULUS.

A stone I died, and rose again a plant;
A plant I died, and rose an animal;
I died an animal, and was born a man.
What have I ever lost by death?

DJELAL-EDDIN-RUMI.
(Persian Mystic, 1207-73.)

No doubt you have had the experience, when passing through a country where you were travelling for the first time, of stopping short, as you rounded a mountain, before some unknown horizon, and finding it strangely familiar. No doubt you have had the experience of arriving at night in a dark square where you had not been before, and briskly finding

your way through it, just as if you were resuming some old habit. . . . .

There are times, too, when you are dreaming, as you sit alone, and suddenly a memory passes over you—the memory of some act the man you are surely never performed. Yet it is not a fabrication, an invention. You know, you feel, that it is a personal memory. A memory of what world, of what life?

Do not reject this shadowy treasure, and do not tremble. Do not accept complacently the explanations of the superstitious or of the pseudo-scientists. The flesh of your flesh was not born yesterday. Something survives in it that is contemporaneous with all the generations. Many a revelation awaits us. Let us keep for them a soul that is accessible, experienced, and not too distrustful.

DR. GEORGES DUHAMEL.
(The Shelter of Life.)

The blue dusk ran between the streets: my love was winged within my mind,
It left to-day and yesterday and thrice a thousand years behind.
To-day was past and dead for me, for from to-day my feet had run
Through thrice a thousand years to walk the ways of ancient Babylon. A. E.

Not unremembering we pass our exile from the
starry ways:
One timeless hour in time we caught from the long
night of endless days. A. E.

Love and pity are pleading with me this hour.
What is this voice that stays me, forbidding to yield,
Offering beauty, love, and immortal power,
Aeons away in some far-off heavenly field?

A. E.

I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which house to-day in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame, or whether they have before had a natural history like that of this body you see before you; but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist . . . . before the world was, they were.

R. W. EMERSON.
(The Method of Nature.)

To vision profounder
  Man's spirit must dive;
His aye-rolling orb
  At no goal did arrive;
The heavens that now draw him
  With sweetness untold,
Once found for new heavens
  He spurneth the old.
Eterne alteration
  Now follows, now flies,
And under pain, pleasure—
  Under pleasure, pain lies.
Love works at the centre,
  Heart-heaving alway;
Forth speed the strong pulses
  To the borders of day.

R. W. EMERSON.
(The Sphinx.)

"Body," observes Plotinus, "is the true river of Lethe!" The memory of definite events in former lives can hardly come easily to a consciousness allied with brain. . . . Bearing in mind also that even our ordinary definite memories slowly become indefinite, and that most drop altogether out of notice, we shall attach no importance to the naive question, "Why does not Smith remember who he was before?" It would be an exceedingly strange fact if he did, a new Smith being now in evidence along with a new brain and nerves. Still, it is conceivable that such remembrances occasionally arise. Cerebral process, conscious or subconscious, is psychical.

E. D. FAWCETT.
(Individuality and Reality.)

These two systems, the purely spiritual and the sensuous—which last may consist of an immeasurable series of particular lives—exist in me from the moment when my active reason is developed, and pursue their parallel course. The former alone gives to the latter meaning and purpose and value. . . . . After an existence of myriad lives the super-sensuous world cannot be more present than at this moment. Other conditions of my sensuous existence are to come, but these are no more the true life than the present condition is....All death in nature is birth;

and precisely in dying, the sublimation of life appears most conspicuous. . . . . Death and birth are only the struggles of life with itself to manifest itself in ever more transfigured form, more like itself.

FICHTE.

The soul of man
Is like the water:
From heaven it cometh,
To heaven it mounteth,
And thence at once
It must back to earth,
Forever changing.

GOETHE.
(Faust.)

How well it is that men should die, if only to erase their impressions and return clean washed!

GOETHE.
(To Frau von Stein.)

Ah, in the depths of time gone by
Thou wast my sister or my wife.

GOETHE.
(To Frau von Stein.)

I cannot explain the significance to me of this woman, or her influence over me, except by the theory of metempsychosis. Yes, we were once man and wife. Now our knowledge of ourselves is veiled, and lies in the spirit-world. I can find no name for us—the past, the future, the All!

GOETHE.
(Letter to Wieland, 1776.)

The experiences gained in one life may not be remembered in their details in the next, but the impressions which they produce will remain. Again and again man passes through the wheel of transformation, changing his lower energies into higher ones, until matter attracts him no longer, and he becomes—what he is destined to be—a god.

——— HARTMANN.

Of all the theories respecting the origin of the soul it (pre-existence) seems to me the most plausible, and therefore the one most likely to throw light on the question of a life to come.

PROF. F. H. HEDGE.

Or ever the knightly years were gone
With the old world to the grave,
I was a King in Babylon,
And you were a Christian slave.

W. E. HENLEY.
(To W.A.)

To purify the heart and to ennoble the soul and all its instincts and desires, this seems to me the true palingenesis of the present life, after which there certainly awaits us a higher and brighter metempsychosis, but one of which we know nothing.

HERDER.

Do you not know great and rare men who cannot have become what they are at once, in a single human existence?—who must have often existed before in order to have attained that purity of feeling, that instinctive impulse for all that is true, beautiful, and good; in short, that elevation and natural supremacy over all around them? . . . . Have you never had remembrances of a former state which you could find no place for in this life? In that beautiful period when the soul is yet a half-closed bud, have you not seen persons, been in places, of which you were ready to swear that you had seen those persons, or had been in those places before? And yet it could not have been in this life? The most blessed moments, the grandest thoughts, are from that source.

HERDER.

Insect and reptile, fish and bird and beast,
Cast their worn robes aside, fresh robes to don;
Tree, flower, and moss, put new year's raiments on;
Each natural type, the greatest as the least,
Renews its vesture when its use hath ceased.
How should man's spirit keep in unison
With the world's law of outgrowth, save it won
New robes and ampler as its girth increased?
Quit shrunken creed, and dwarfed philosophy!
Let gently die an art's decaying fire!
Work on the ancient lines, but yet be free
To leave and frame anew, if God aspire!
The planets change their surface as they roll:
The force that binds the spheres must bind the soul.

HENRY G. HEWLETT.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.
(The Chambered Nautilus.)

The soul, if immortal, existed before our birth.
What is incorruptible must be ungenerable.
Metempsychosis is the only system of immortality that philosophy can hearken to. HUME.

The soul, therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth, and if the former existence noways concerns us, neither will the latter.

HUME.
(The Immortality of the Soul.)

Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the world of reality; and it may claim such support as the great argument from analogy is capable of supplying.

PROF. HUXLEY.
(Evolution and Ethics.)

On each of the changing generations was one soul, in which Adam rose again in purity: he was mighty in Moses the law-giver: he had strength to subdue the world in Alexander of Macedon: he was almost perfect in Jesus of Nazareth.

IBSEN.
(Emperor and Galilean.)

One there is who ever returns to the life of the human race within a certain space of time. He is like a rider attempting to break a wild horse in the riding school. Time after time the horse throws him. But a while and he is in the saddle again, a little more firmly seated and with more experience; and yet fall he must in his various forms even to this

day. He was doomed to fall as the man divinely wrought in the Garden of Eden; he was doomed to fall as the founder of a world-wide empire, or as the prince of the kingdom of God. Who knows how many times he has been among us unrecognised? Knowest thou, Julian, that thou wast not in him whom now thou persecutest? IBSEN.

(Emperor and Galilean.)

The ancient doctrine of transmigration seems the most rational and most consistent with God's wisdom and goodness; as by it, all the unequal dispensations of things so necessary in one life may be set right in another, and all creatures serve the highest and lowest, the most eligible and most burdensome offices of life, by an equitable rotation; by which means their rewards and punishments may not only be proportioned to their behaviour, but also carry on the business of the universe, and thus at the same time answer the purposes both of justice and utility.

SOAME JENYNS.

That mankind had existed in some state previous to the present, was the opinion of the wisest sages of the most remote antiquity. It was held by the Gymnosophists of Egypt, the Brachmans of India, the Magi of Persia, and the greatest philosophers of Greece and Rome; it was likewise adopted by the

Fathers of the Christian Church, and frequently enforced by her primitive writers. Why it has been so little noticed, so much overlooked rather than rejected, by the divines and metaphysicians of later ages, I am at a loss to account for, as it is undoubtedly confirmed by reason, by all the appearances of nature, and the doctrines of revelation.

SOAME JENYNS.

(Disquisition on a Pre-existent State.)

And all unwrought the clogs of thought
  Shall drop from me, a load,
And all the mesh of weary flesh
  Be in the earth bestowed,
But all shall be a part of me
  That to my spirit flowed,
When I go tramp to Lonely Camp,
  Along the Lonely Road.

Then I'll renew an age or two
  At lovely Lonely Camp;
My spirit's force at Spirit's source,
  The starry lighting Lamp,
Then maybe earth will give my birth
  A more celestial stamp;
A stronger soul with more control,
  Returned from Lonely Camp.

W. H. JOYCE (N.Z.).

Can it be
That the dim memory of events long passed,
Of friendships formed in other states of being
Flits like a passing shadow o'er the spirit?

KALIDESA.
(From the Sanscrit.)

If we could legitimately determine any question of belief by the number of its adherents, the *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*, would apply to metempsychosis more fitly than to any other. I think it quite as likely to be revived and to come to the front again as any rival theory.

PROF. WILLIAM KNIGHT.

As the inheritance of an illustrious name and pedigree quickens the sense of duty in every noble nature, a belief in pre-existence may enhance the glory of the present life and intensify the reverence with which the deathless principle is regarded.

IBID.

The absence of memory of any actions done in a previous state cannot be a conclusive argument against our having lived through it. Forgetfulness of the past may be one of the conditions of an entrance upon a new state of existence. The body, which is the organ of sense-perception, may be quite

as much a hindrance as a help to remembrance. In that case casual gleams of memory, giving us sudden abrupt and momentary revelations of the past, are precisely the phenomena we would expect to meet with. If the soul has pre-existed, what we would *a priori* anticipate are only some faint traces of recollection surviving in the crypts of memory.

IBID.

Though the laws governing Reincarnation probably work, as it were, mechanically upon the vast majority of undeveloped Egos, it seems certain from the instances observed, that as soon as any one Ego makes a little progress of any sort, and so becomes hopeful from the evolutionary point of view, considerable elasticity is introduced into the arrangements, and within certain definite limits he would be likely to be born into the sex and race which were best suited to give him an opportunity of strengthening the weak points in his character.

C. W. LEADBEATER.
(Extracts from the Vahan.)

The second great law under which this evolution is taking place is the law of cause and effect. There can be no effect without its cause, and every cause must produce its effect. They are in fact not two, but one, for the effect is really part of the cause, and

he who sets one in motion sets the other also. There is in nature no such idea as that of reward or punishment, but only of cause and effect. Anyone can see this in connection with mechanics or chemistry; the clairvoyant sees it equally clearly with regard to the problems of evolution. The same law obtains in the higher as in the lower worlds; there, as here, the angle of reflection is always equal to the angle of incidence. It is a law of mechanics that action and reaction are equal and opposite. In the almost infinitely finer matter of the higher worlds the reaction is by no means always instantaneous; it may sometimes be spread over long periods of time, but it returns inevitably and exactly.

C. W. LEADBEATER.
(A Textbook of Theosophy.)

Thou and I in spirit land
One thousand years ago,
Watched the waves beat on the strand,
Ceaseless ebb and flow,
Vowed to love and ever love,
One thousand years ago.

Thou and I but yesterday,
Met in fashion's show.
Love, did you remember me,
Love of long ago?
Yes, we kept the fond oath sworn
One thousand years ago.

CHARLES G. LELAND.

The very same way by which the race reaches its perfection must every individual man—one sooner, another later—have travelled over. Have travelled over in one and the same life? Can he have been in the one and the selfsame life a sensual Jew and a spiritual Christian? Can he in the selfsame life have overtaken both? Surely not that: but why should not every individual man have existed more than once upon this world? Is this hypothesis so laughable merely because it is the oldest? Because the human understanding, before the sophistries of the schools had dissipated and debilitated it, lighted upon it at once? On the contrary, the first and

earliest opinion in matters of speculation is invariably the most probable, because it was immediately accepted by the sound understanding of mankind.

LESSING.
(Education of the Human Race.)

Is it, after all, so certain that my soul has only once inhabited the form of man? Is it, after all, so unreasonable to suppose that my soul, upon its journey to perfection, should have been forced to wear this fleshly veil more than once? Possibly this migration of the soul through several human bodies was based on a new system of thought. Possibly this new system was merely the oldest of all.

IBID.

Why should I not at one time have taken those steps toward perfection which can bring but temporal rewards and punishments to men? Why, again, should I not have made at another time that progress to which our vision of eternal reward is so great a help? Why should I not return as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge and further power? Do I achieve so much in one sojourning as to make it not worth my while to return? Never! Or, is it that I forget my former sojourn? Well for me that I forget. The recollection of my former state would enable me to turn my present

condition to but poor account. And have I forgotten for ever what I must forget for the time being? Or is it that I should lose so much time? Lose time! What need have I for haste? Is not the whole of eternity mine?

IBID.
(Education of the Human Race.)

Ah, sure, as Hindoo legends tell,
When music's tones the bosom swell,
The scenes of former life return,
Ere, sunk beneath the morning star,
We left our parent climes afar,
Immured in mortal forms to dwell.

DR. LEYDEN.
(Ode to Scottish Music.)

We saw the River Kadisha descending from Lebanon. The whole scene bore that strange and shadowy resemblance to the wondrous landscape in "Kubla Khan" that one so often feels in actual life, when the whole scene around you appears to be reacting after a long interval. Your friends seated in the same juxtaposition, the subjects of conversation the same, and shifting with the same dreamlike ease, that you remember at some remote and indefinite period of pre-existence; you always know what

will come next, and sit spellbound, as it were, in a sort of calm expectancy.

LORD LINDSAY.
(Letters.)

Thus the seer, with vision clear,
Sees forms appear and disappear
In the perpetual round of strange
Mysterious chance
From birth to death, from death to birth,
From earth to heaven, from heaven to earth,
Till glimpses more sublime
Of things unseen before
Unto his wondering eyes reveal
The universe, as an immeasurable wheel
Turning for evermore
In the rapid rushing river of time.

LONGFELLOW.

Sometimes a dream floats by me,
An odour from Dreamland sent,
Which makes the ghost seem nigh me
Of a something that came and went,
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not
In what diviner sphere:
Of mem'ries that come not and go not;
Like music once heard by an ear
That cannot forget or reclaim it;
A something so shy, it would shame it
To make it a show.
A something too vague, could I name it,
For others to know:
As though I had lived it and dreamed it,
As though I had acted and schemed it
Long ago.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

. . . . That strange kind of inner and spiritual memory which often recalls to us places and persons we have never seen before, and which Platonists would resolve to be the unquenched and struggling consciousness of a former life.

BULWER LYTTON.

How strange is it that at times a feeling comes over us as we gaze upon certain places, which associates the scene either with some dim remembered

and dreamlike images of the Past, or with a prophetic and fearful omen of the Future. Everyone has known a similar strange and indistinct feeling at certain times and places, and with a similar inability to trace the cause.

BULWER LYTTON.
(Godolphin.)

We may have loved in days of Grecian glory,
We may have died beside the templed Nile:
What matters now the sequence of our story,
Since we have met who parted were awhile.

Child of the dawning, once again begotten,
Come back to me from out the golden past,
Deep in your eyes I read naught is forgotten,
Rose of the World, I kiss your lips at last!

KENNETH MACKAY.

Heredity is acquired knowledge, experimental truth; pre-existence is a logical necessity. . . . . Heredity, which is unquestionable, and pre-existence, which is necessary, remind us once more that each of us is not a unique being, isolated, permanent, hermetically sealed, independent of others, and separated from all in space and time, but a porous vessel plunged into the infinite, a sort of crossroad at which cross all the highways of the past, the present, and

the future; an inn beside the eternal roads at which unite, for a few days, all the lives which form our life. We believe ourselves dead when these leave the inn, and imagine that they also perish. It is more likely that this is not the case. They simply leave the ruined hostel, to take up their abode in a new and more habitable dwelling. They carry with them their trusts and their obligations, their habits, their instincts, their ideas, their passions, their deserts, their faults, their acquirements, and their memories. The house is changed, but the guests are the same, and the former existence will renew its course in the new dwelling, perhaps a little nobler, perhaps a little more beautiful, perhaps shining with a purer light. . . . . .

MAURICE MAETERLINCK.
(Les Sentiers dans la Montagne.)

As many hairs as grow on the beast, so many similar deaths shall the man who slays that beast for his own satisfaction in this world pass through in the next from birth to birth. LAWS OF MANU.

Surely death acquires a new and deeper significance when we regard it no longer as a single and unexplained break in an unending life, but as part of the continually recurring rhythm of progress—as inevitable, as natural, and as benevolent as sleep.

PROF. J. McTAGGART.

There seems nothing in pre-existence incompatible with any of the dogmas which are generally accepted as fundamental to Christianity.

IBID.

In the case of personal relations, I don't see that heredity would help us at all. Heredity, however, can produce a more satisfactory explanation of innate aptitudes. On the other hand, the doctrine of pre-existence does not compel us to deny all influence on a man's character of the character of his ancestors. The character which a man has at any time, is modified by any circumstances which happen to him at that time, and may well be modified by the fact that his re-birth is in a body descended from ancestors of a peculiar character.

IBID.

For man to tell how human life began
Is hard: for who himself beginning knew?

JOHN MILTON.

The soul grows clotted by oblivion,
Imbodies and embrutes till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being;
Such as those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved.

JOHN MILTON.
(Comus.)

Wert thou that just maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou that sweet smiling youth?
Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?
Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed
As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,
To scorn the sordid world and unto heaven aspire?

JOHN MILTON.
(On the Death of a Fair Infant.)

The pre-existence of souls is a necessary result of the wisdom and goodness of God.

DR. HENRY MORE.

I produced the golden key of pre-existence only at a dead lift, when no other method could satisfy me touching the ways of God, that by this hypothesis I might keep my heart from sinking.

DR. HENRY MORE.

Of course, no Indian philosopher doubts the fact of transmigration. It is to him as certain as our migration through this life. The physiological details of this migration or transmigration are often fanciful and childish. How could they be otherwise in those early days? But the broad fact of transmigration remains unaffected by these fanciful details, and it is well known that this dogma has been accepted by the greatest philosophers of all countries.

PROF. MAX MÜLLER.
(Vedanta Philosophy.)

Death, so-called, is but old matter dressed
In some new form. And in a varied vest
From tenement to tenement, though tossed,
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost:
And, as the softened wax new seals receives,
This face assumes, and that impression leaves,
Now called by one, now by another's name,
The form alone is changed; the wax is still the same.
Then, to be born is to begin to be
Some other thing we were not formerly.
That forms are changed, I grant; that nothing can
Continue in the figure it began.

OVID.

Full oft my feelings make me start,
Like footprints on a desert shore,
As if the chambers of my heart
Had heard their shadowy step before.

So looking into thy fond eyes,
Strange memories come to me, as though
Somewhere—perchance in Paradise—
I had adored thee long ago.

THOMAS W. PARSONS.

Thy voice is like to music heard ere birth,
Some spirit light touched on a spirit sea;
Thy face remembered is from other worlds.
It has been died for, though I know not when;
It has been sung of, though I know not where.
It has the strangeness of the luring West,
And of sad sea-horizons; beside thee
I am aware of other times and lands,
Of birth far back, of lives in many stars.

STEPHEN PHILLIPS.
(Marpessa.)

Souls are continually born over again from Hades into this life.

PLATO.

The soul always weaves her garment anew.

PLATO.

The soul has a natural strength which will hold out and be born many times.

PLATO.

We walk apart, amid the destinies of our world existence, accompanied by dim, but ever-present, memories of a Destiny more vast—very distant in the bygone time and infinitely awful. . . . We live out a youth peculiarly haunted by such dreams, yet

never mistaking them for dreams. As *memories* we know them. During our youth the distinctness is too clear to deceive us even for a moment. But the doubt of manhood dispels these feelings as illusions.

EDGAR ALLEN POE.
(Eureka.)

The weary pilgrim oft doth seek to know
How far he's come; how far he has to go.

QUARLES.

Our Saviour seems to approve of the doctrine of pre-existence in His answer to His disciples when they interrogate Him thus about the man born blind: "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" It is clear that this question would have been ridiculous and impertinent if the disciples had not believed that the man born blind had sinned before his corporeal birth, and, consequently, that he had pre-existed in another state. Our Saviour's answer is remarkable: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

Jesus Christ could not mean that neither this man nor his parents had ever sinned, for this can be said of no mortal; but the meaning is, that it was neither for the sins committed by this man in a state of pre-

existence, nor for those of his parents, that he was born blind, but in order to manifest one day the power of God. Our Lord, therefore, far from blaming and redressing this error in His disciples, answers in a way that seems to confirm them in the doctrine of pre-existence. If He had looked upon this opinion as a capital error, would it have been compatible with His wisdom to pass it over so slightly, and tacitly authorise it? On the contrary, does not His silence indicate that He looked upon this doctrine, which was a received maxim of the Jewish church, as the true explication of original sin?

CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

There is nothing in the Fathers nor Councils that contradicts this doctrine (of pre-existence); yea, while the Fifth General Council and all the Fathers after the sixth century condemn a false idea of pre-existence in which the ancient tradition was adulterated by the Origenists and Priscillianists, the true doctrine of pre-existence was not condemned by the Church.

CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

It is only a profound ignorance of the ancient, primitive tradition of pre-existence that can make men mistake the true sense of this sublime text.

CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

The house of life hath many chambers.

ROSETTI.

What sleep is for the individual, death is for the will (character). It would not endure to continue the same actions and sufferings through an eternity, without true gain, if memory and individuality remained to it. It flings them off, and this is lethe; and through this sleep of death it reappears, refreshed and fitted out with another intellect, as a new being—"a new day tempts to new shores."

SCHOPENHAUER.
(The World as Will and Idea.)

The myth of the transmigration of souls has this great advantage, that it contains no elements except those which lie before our eyes in the sphere of actuality, so that it is able in consequence to provide ocular proof of its conceptions.

IBID.

Constantly as the pieces played and the masks worn upon a stage of the world may change, yet the players remain the same throughout. We sit in company and talk and grow excited; eyes light and voices ring clearer: but so did others sit a thousand

years ago: they and the scene were the same, and so shall it be a thousand years hence. The mechanism which prevents our realisation of this fact is time.

——— IBID.

Every man is his own ancestor, and every man his own heir. He devises his own future, and he inherits his own past.

SCIENCE SIFTINGS.
(Vol. V.)

I cannot, I am sure, tell if it is worth marking down, that yesterday at dinner time, I was strangely haunted by what I would call the sense of pre-existence—viz., a confused idea that nothing that passed was said for the first time; that the same topics had been discussed and the same persons had stated the same opinions on them. . . . There was a vile sense of unreality in all I said or did.

DIARY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

How often do we find ourselves in society which we have never before met, and yet feel impressed with a mysterious and ill-defined consciousness that neither the scene nor the speakers nor the subject are entirely new; nay, feel as if we could anticipate that part of the conversation which has not yet taken place? SIR WALTER SCOTT.
(Guy Mannering.)

None sees the slow and upward sweep
By which the soul from life-depths deep
Ascends,—unless, mayhap, when free,
With each new death we backward see
The long perspective of our race,
Our multitudinous past lives trace.

WILLIAM SHARP.

If there be no reasons to suppose that we have existed before that period at which our existence apparently commences, then there are no grounds for supposing that we shall continue to exist after our existence has apparently ceased.

SHELLEY.

Ye gentle visitations of calm thought—
Moods like the memories of happier earth
Which come arrayed in thoughts of little worth
Like stars in clouds by the weak winds enwrought.

SHELLEY.

I have a strong and lively faith in a state of continued consciousness from this state of existence, and that we shall recover from the consciousness of some lower stages through which we may previously have passed seems to me not impossible.

SOUTHEY.
(Letters.)

For of the soul the body form doth take,
For soul is form, and doth the body make.

——— SPENSER.

Another life, the life of day o'erwhelms,
The past from present consciousness takes hue
As we remember vast and cloudy realms
Our feet have wandered through:
So oft, some moonlight of the mind makes dumb
The stir of outer thought: wide open seems
The gate where through strange sympathies have come
The secret of our dreams.

BAYARD TAYLOR.
(The Metempsychosis of the Pine.)

Together with the adherents of the mysteries in every land, the Orphics (followers of Orpheus) believed in Reincarnation.

THOMAS TAYLOR.

The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,
And the man said, "Am I your debtor?"
And the Lord, "Not yet, but make it as clean as you can,
And then I will let you a better."

ALFRED TENNYSON.
(By an Evolutionist.)

I hold it truth with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.*

ALFRED TENNYSON.

Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Where all that was to be, in all that was,
Whirled for a million aeons thro' the vast
Waste dawn of multitudinous eddying light—
Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,
Through all this changing world of changeless law,
And every phase of ever heightening life,
And nine long months of ante-natal gloom,
Thou comest.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

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*This may, or may not, have been intended by Tennyson to refer to reincarnation.—Ed.

How could ye know him? Ye were yet within
The narrower circle: he had well-nigh reached
The last, which with a region of white flame,
Pure, without heat, into a larger air
Upburning, with an ether of black blue,
Investeth and ingirds all other lives.

ALFRED TENNYSON.
(The Mystic.)

As when with downcast eyes we muse and brood
And ebb into a former life. . . . . .

ALFRED TENNYSON.
(Early Sonnets.)

" . . . O dear spirit half lost
In thine own shadow . . . .
who wailest being born
And banished into mystery, and the pain
Of this divisible-indivisible world. . . . .
Live thou . . . . .
From death to death, thro' life and life."

ALFRED TENNYSON.
(De Profundis.)

Some draught of Lethe doth await,
As old mythologists relate,
The slipping through from state to state.

Moreover, something is or seems,
That touches me with mystic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—

Of something felt, like something here;
Of something done, I know not where;
Such as no language may declare.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

As when with downcast eyes we muse and brood
And ebb into a former life, or seem
To lapse far back in a confused dream
To states of mystical similitude,
If one but speaks or hems or stirs a chair
Ever the wonder waxeth more and more,
So that we say, all this hath been before,
All this *hath* been, I know not when or where;

So, friend, when first I looked upon your face
Our thoughts gave answer each to each, so true,
Opposed mirrors each reflecting each—
Although I knew not in what time or place,
Methought that I had often met with you,
And each had lived in other's mind and speech.

ALFRED TENNYSON.

What myriads of years up from the germ!
What countless ages back from man to worm!
And yet from man to God—oh, help me now!
A cold despair is beading on my brow!
I may see Him, and seeing, know Him not!
What is the highest thought?

MAURICE THOMPSON.

Where wert thou, Soul, ere yet my body born
Became thy dwelling-place? Didst thou on earth
Or in the clouds, await this body's birth,
Or by what chance upon that winter's morn
Didst thou this body find, a babe forlorn?
Didst thou in sorrow enter, or in mirth?
Or for a jest, perchance, to try its worth
Thou tookest flesh, ne'er from it to be torn.

——— WADDINGTON.

Only the profoundly conceived idea of Reincarnation could give me any consolation, since that belief shows how all at last can reach complete redemption. According to this beautiful belief, the spotless purity of Lohengrin finds a simple explanation in the fact that he is the continuation of Parsifal, who had to fight for his purity. Even so, Elsa, in her re-birth, would reach to the height of Lohengrin.

WAGNER.
(Letters to Matilde Wesendonke.)

Evolution may fairly be claimed as a spiritual truth applying to all the methods of life. The gradual development of the soul, by the school of experience, demands a vaster arena of action than one earthly life affords. If it takes ages of time and thousands of lives to form one kind of animal from another, the expansion of human souls from lower to higher natures surely needs many and many a life for that growth.

E. D. WALKER.

I know I am deathless.
I know that this orbit of mine cannot be swept by a carpenter's compass;
And whether I come to my own to-day, or in ten thousand or ten million years,
I can cheerfully take it now, or with equal cheerfulness I can wait.
No doubt I have died myself ten thousand times before.
Births have brought us richness and variety, and other births have brought us richness and variety.

WALT WHITMAN.
(Leaves of Grass.)

I am: how little more I know!
Whence came I? Whither do I go?
A central self which feels and is;
A cry between the silences;
A shadow-birth of clouds at strife
With sunshine on the hills of life;
A shaft from Nature's quiver cast
Into the future from the past.

WHITTIER.

Oh, no! We live our life again:
Or warmly touched, or coldly dim,
The pictures of the Past remain—
Man's works shall follow him!

WHITTIER.

The friends of Lavater at Copenhagen believe in a transmigration of the soul. They believe that several of Jesus' apostles live again on earth without any recollection of their former lives as apostles. Prince Karl of Hesse was the apostle Peter, and the Danish Minister of State, Andreas of Bernsdorf, was Thomas. Lavater was once King Josiah of Judah; then he became Joseph of Arimathea, and then the reformer Ulrich Zwingli. The apostle John is still

alive, as Jesus foretold; knows who he is, and can remember his life with Jesus. He travels much about the world, and can assume different forms in order to avoid recognition. He is a Freemason, and first visited Prince Karl of Hesse to ask his help as a brother Mason.

(Quoted from the diary of a woman of Zurich, friend of Lavater, by Otto Stoll, in "Suggestion and Hypnotism in Racial Psychology.")

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the East
Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Look nature through; 'tis revolution all,
All change; no death. Day follows night, and night
The dying day; stars rise and set, and set and rise.
Earth takes the example. All to reflourish fades:
As in a wheel all sinks to reascend;
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

YOUNG.

Published by the Theosophical Publishing House,
Sydney.